

§ 1794.54

applicant to develop and submit an ER. The ER shall be prepared under the supervision and guidance of RUS staff and RUS shall evaluate and be responsible for the accuracy of all information contained therein.

(b) The applicant's ER will normally serve as the RUS EA. After RUS has reviewed and found the ER to be satisfactory, the applicant shall provide RUS with a sufficient number of copies of the ER to satisfy the RUS distribution plan.

(c) The ER shall include a summary of the construction and operation monitoring and mitigation measures for the proposed action. These measures may be revised as appropriate in response to comments and other information, and shall be incorporated by summary or reference into the FONSI.

[68 FR 45160, Aug. 1, 2003]

§ 1794.54 Agency determination.

Following the scoping process and the development of a satisfactory ER by the applicant or its consultant that will serve as the agency's EA, RUS shall determine whether the proposed action is a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. If RUS determines the action is significant, RUS will continue with the procedures in subpart G of this part. If RUS determines the action is not significant, RUS will proceed in accordance with §§ 1794.42 through 1794.44. For proposals subject to the procedures of subpart F, RUS shall publish notices in the FEDERAL REGISTER that announce the availability of the EA and solicit public comments on the EA (refer to § 1794.42) and the RUS finding and the availability of the EA and FONSI (refer to § 1794.43).

[68 FR 45160, Aug. 1, 2003]

§§ 1794.55–1794.59 [Reserved]

Subpart G—Procedure for Environmental Impact Statements

§ 1794.60 Normal sequence.

For proposed actions requiring an EIS (see § 1794.25), the NEPA process shall proceed in the same manner as for proposed actions requiring an EA

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with scoping through the point at which the scoping process is completed (see § 1794.52).

§ 1794.61 Environmental impact statement.

An EIS shall be prepared in accordance with 40 CFR part 1502. Funding, in whole or in part, for an EIS can be obtained from any lawful source (*e.g.*, cooperative agreements developed in accordance with Section 759A, Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104–127 and 31 U.S.C. 6301). A third-party consultant selected by RUS and funded by the applicant (7 CFR part 1789) may prepare the EIS.

(a) After a draft or final EIS has been prepared, RUS and the applicant shall concurrently have a notice of availability for the document published. The time period allowed for review will be a minimum of 45 days for a draft EIS and 30 days for a final EIS. This period is measured from the date that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER in accordance with 40 CFR 1506.10.

(b) In addition to circulation required by 40 CFR 1502.19, the draft and final EIS (or summaries thereof, at RUS discretion) shall be circulated to the appropriate state, regional, and metropolitan clearinghouses.

(c) Where a final EIS does not require substantial changes from the draft EIS, RUS may document required changes through errata sheets, insertion pages, and revised sections to be incorporated into the draft EIS. In such cases, RUS shall circulate such changes together with comments on the draft EIS, responses to comments, and other appropriate information as its final EIS. RUS will not circulate the draft EIS again, although RUS will provide the draft EIS if requested within 30 days of publication of notice of availability of the final EIS.

[63 FR 68655, Dec. 11, 1998, as amended at 68 FR 45160, Aug. 1, 2003]

§ 1794.62 Supplemental EIS.

(a) A supplement to a draft or final EIS shall be prepared, circulated, and given notice by RUS and the applicant in the same manner (exclusive of